

Bavarian News

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U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt and Garmisch

November 10, 2010

ESPN to broadcast live from Graf on Veterans Day

by **Denver Makle**
*7th U.S. Army JMTC
Public Affairs*

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — ESPN honors veterans of the U.S. armed services with a week of programs — “America’s Heroes: A Salute to Our Veterans” — culminating in a special SportsCenter broadcast, live from the Grafenwoehr parade field, Nov. 11, Veterans Day, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. (Central European Time).

The special SportsCenter will honor veterans, Soldiers and families of U.S. Army Europe. ESPN anchors Hannah Storm and Josh Elliot will host the broadcast.

The event is open to all military ID-cardholders and their guests. Service members will also have an opportunity to give shout-outs to friends and family during this live broadcast. A ceremony, static displays and military vehicle and equipment demonstrations are planned. The U.S. Army Europe Marching Band

and the Vilseck High School Marching Band will perform. The festivities also include a community tailgate party in the overflow parking lot of the Grafenwoehr Post Exchange featuring entertainment and food vendors. Community members are welcome to bring their own barbeque grills and seating to tailgate.

“ESPN is thrilled to bring SportsCenter to the Grafenwoehr Military Community. What better way to honor Soldiers and veterans worldwide

on Veterans Day than to be among one of the single largest group of Soldiers and their families outside the continental United States,” said Jack Obringer, SportsCenter senior coordinating producer. “Honoring veterans has become an important initiative for ESPN and the SportsCenter team is excited to be part of what will be a memorable event at such a significant installation and community on Veterans Day.”

ESPN will highlight a Warrior
See ESPN, page 12

Herculean effort



Photo by Aryn Lockhart

GARMISCH, Germany — Matthias Martin of Garmisch puts his brawn to the test against 31 competitors in the Marlburg Strongman Competition, Oct. 10. Martin won the 105-kilogram category and finished third overall.

Heavy lifters travelled from all over Germany to compete in several events including a truck pull, 100-kg Viking press and the Bavarian Stone lift.

Saber Strike 11

Multinational bonds live on after the 12-day exercise ends

Story and photos by
Spc. Robert J. Holland
*172nd Infantry Brigade
Public Affairs*

ADAZI TRAINING AREA, Latvia — Over 1,500 soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the U.S. Army descended on Adazi Training Center, Latvia, for 12 days to participate in Saber Strike 11, which ended Oct. 29. Soldiers fought simulated enemies day and night, trained in freezing rain, hail and snow, and despite the austere conditions, forged many new international bonds of friendship.

Soldiers representing the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade in Operation Saber Strike 11 included A Company, 1-2nd Infantry, Task Force 3-66, 172nd Support Battalion, and 504th Military Intelligence Company. Saber Strike is a cooperative training exercise designed to help bolster the relationship between the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the U.S. Army, as well as improve joint operational capability between the three countries.

For a majority of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade Soldiers, it was their first time being in former Warsaw Pact territory. However, for one Soldier, the multinational exercise felt like coming home.

Spc. Ruslan Khushenazarov, linguist, 504th MI Co., 172nd Sep. Inf. Bde., spent over two years in the Soviet army as conscript when he was living in Ukraine 25 years ago. Khushenazarov has since immigrated to New York and now proudly serves in the all volunteer force of the U.S. Army.

“Certain things have changed tremendously in 25 years,” Khushenazarov said. “Chow is much better. Trust me, for a lot of Americans, the food served back then wouldn’t have been edible at all.”

Khushenazarov, often with great enthusiasm, weaved his war stories from his Warsaw Pact days over meals in the Latvian dining facility.

“It felt strange to be back here, but at the same time it feels like a blast from the



Latvian and U.S. Soldiers from A Company, 1-2nd Infantry, Task Force 3-66, 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, train using tactics for clearing buildings.

past,” Khushenazarov said. “I’m happy. I actually get to see and experience something I haven’t been able to experience for a quarter of a

century.”

Khushenazarov, whose smile could not be dimmed even by the bitterest of cold weather, said that the training

and partnership building here has been very successful. The willingness, he said, of all the countries to learn from each other is what makes the difference. See EXERCISE, page 12

Garrison celebrates National Education Week

by **Ann Bruennig**
USAG Grafenwoehr

Education starts the day your child is born and as adults we continue to learn something new every day.

Related story: Spring break is now April 16-24. See page 12.



Bratislava

Tucked between Vienna and Budapest, the capital of the Slovak Republic is a cultural gem. See page 9.

Hohenfels homecoming a smashing success

by **Andrew Mulvihill**
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — The Hohenfels Tigers mauled the Bamberg Barons, 23-20, in a hard fought homecoming victory, Oct. 8. “I think this is one of the best homecomings we’ve had,” said Daniel Mendoza, principal of Hohenfels High School.

According to Mendoza, the whole community got into the act. “We even had a community member loan us their car,” he said. “It was one of the better organized homecoming activities that we’ve had, 45 mini-cheerleaders and their parents, the homecoming coronation ... and the band played extremely well.”

Coronation involved crowning this year’s royal couple, Nick Dominguez and Christina Robinson.

The high school also celebrated Spirit Week in the days leading up to the game. Students participated in various activities designed to support the players and enhance team spirit across the school.

The tennis, volleyball and cross country teams held their homecoming compe-



Left: Students show off their best dance moves during the Hohenfels Homecoming Dance. Right: Homecoming king and queen Nick Dominguez and Christina Robinson look regal as they head into the dance.



Photos by Ron Elliot

titions Oct. 9. With SATs in the morning, followed by the home games and then the Homecoming dance in the evening, it was a stressful day for many athletes.

Regardless, the homecoming dance was a great success.

“I think this homecoming dance was

better than any other dance we’ve had in several years,” said Kendon Johnson, school guidance counselor and organizer of the event. “The students enjoyed it, the parents enjoyed it, and there seemed to be no problems during the course of the dance.”

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Water Tower art by Dane Gray

Soldiers collide in Combat Cross Country

by Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Struggling through five kilometers of grueling terrain, Soldiers from across Germany competed in the Annual U.S. Forces Europe Combat Cross Country Championship at USAG Hohenfels, Oct. 7.

Designed to encourage unit cohesion, that spirit is exactly what drove Capt. Christopher Haag of the 7th Troop, 2nd Stryker Calvary Regiment's rear detachment out of Vilseck to finish with the fastest time.

"I could still see some guys behind me at parts of the course," Haag said, "and I knew if I let up just a little bit that I wouldn't have done my comrades in arms in Afghanistan — and most importantly the seven casualties from our unit - the proper respect with a 110 percent performance."

Hohenfels has hosted the competition for the past four years.

"We have the toughest course," said Bill Craven, FMWR sports manager. "The terrain we can offer here is better, more rugged."

Communities represented at this year's event included Stuttgart with the 1/10th Special Forces Group while the 7-2SCR rear detachment came



Photo by Emily Gourgues

And they're off! Competitors sprint across the starting line as the Annual U.S. Forces Europe Combat Cross Country Championship at USAG Hohenfels gets under way, Oct. 7.

from Grafenwoehr. Hohenfels fielded four teams, 1st, 2nd and 3rd platoons from B Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment and the Hohenfels

Health Clinic.

Spc. Jennifer Holycross from the Hohenfels Health Clinic won recognition as the only female competitor.

Haunted house brings American traditions to local community

by Ronald H. Toland Jr.
USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

ANSBACH, Germany — Ah, Halloween has come and gone another year, and as Americans, we all know the tradition surrounding it. But what about our host nation counterparts — what do they know about this thing we call Halloween?

Traditionally, unless local nationals are involved with an American citizen, they would usually not know of this event. But in recent years, with the German media and marketing hype of Halloween on the rise, that has all changed.

And one German-American family is doing its part to educate a local community about it.

In his sophomore effort, one 22-year-old decided to bring the traditional American haunted house thrill to his community of Lengfeld, a suburb of Wuerzburg.

"I wanted to introduce and integrate the idea to the community because it brings people together to have fun," said event organizer, Favian Leavitt, a local volunteer fireman of half American and half German decent.

However, Leavitt said that the thrill of Halloween and a haunted house is not the only reason for the event.

"We are all volunteer firefighters and our younger firefighters here are putting this on," he said. "We want the fire department to be in the kids' minds later on so we can recruit them when they are of age."

Leavitt explained that as volunteer firefighters, they not only train themselves, but also recruit and train the youngsters (from 10 years and up) to become firefighters, as well as conduct other activities like theatre plays and the haunted house.

"Our younger fighters are the ones who put this together and are operating it," said the junior Leavitt. "This not only is fun for them, but integrates the kids early on to the idea of being volunteer firefighters and keeps the fire burning in their minds about becoming volunteer firefighters when they are old enough," he said.

And his colleagues could not agree more.

"It is a good thing for Lengfeld and for the children — keeping the fire department in the minds of the children, when we can recruit them when they are 10," said Thorsten Artmann, volunteer firefighter who helped the others coordinate the event.

"Plus, it has become really



Courtesy photo

Twelve-year-old Micheal Duenchner, volunteer fire department recruit, makes last-minute preparations and checks of the haunted house in Lengfeld.

trendy and present in the past few years in German culture, so that adds to the fun for the children."

"It is exciting for the kids — it is great for them," said Felix Knauer who also works alongside Leavitt. "It is the biggest thing in the Lengfeld community — nothing like this compares."

Leavitt noted that there were 254 attendees, which is a big increase from last year.

"It is great for community relations, to encourage involvement of the youth of the community, to keep the tradition of Halloween going and to introduce it to some Germans who do not understand it," said Sam Leavitt, Favian's father.

"I think that it strengthens relations across cultures and communities, because it shows how Americans celebrate this event, which the Germans or most Europeans call Hallow's Eve, and because Nov. 1 is a holiday for the Germans, unlike in America," said the senior Leavitt. "It builds a better understanding of the two cultures and the two societies — how they recognize the same thing, but in a different way."

As well, he explained that the tradition has been missed in the community.

"Since 1945, there used to be a large American force and population here where the Germans enjoyed trick-or-treating on the American base; but now that base is shut down and this just keeps that influence that the Americans made still in the Germans minds, which is a good thing," said Leavitt.

And his wife agreed. "I believe that when the children

are learning what other cultures are like, that can only be a plus — this keeps the American spirit alive in the community" said Christiane Leavitt.

She explained that the Germans are sad that the Americans have left the community, where her son used to attend Halloween activities on base and because of that, he wanted to revive the spirit, and is now doing it at the fire brigade.

However, she said that this is not a heathen event, but helps educate the Germans about what Halloween is about and said that it is a time to bring people together when darkness falls much earlier, which can be a sad time.

"When people come together under these types of conditions to celebrate, it is always fun, especially when the children are involved," she said. "It gives them and the children from the fire brigade something to work for and achieve, plus keeps them off the street and involved in something productive," she said.

Community families who came out for the scream said the event was worthwhile and agreed that community interaction and integration is important.

"Mingling together and having a sense of community involvement is fun for adults as well as the children," said Dirk Beuschel who brought his family out.

"The people of the town are coming together and having fun together — you meet the people you like, you know them, you meet new people ... this is a place where everybody can come."

Garmisch conducts first Org Day in recent memory

by John Reese
USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

GARMISCH, Germany — USAG Garmisch gathered the garrison's Soldiers, Department of Defense civilians, local national civilians, and family members on Oct. 15 for an organizational day of teamwork and camaraderie.

Except for critical personnel working as a skeleton crew, garrison employees met on the Breitenau soccer field to begin organizational day with a group photo. Retired Command Sgt. Maj. John Burns, now head of the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, got the team in good spirits for the photo under gray skies by dropping to the wet grass in suit and tie to knock out 20. The crowd in the bleachers waiting for their group photo cheerfully counted out the pushups in German and English.

"Org Day was a great success," said Burns later. "Everyone had fun and we learned a little more about each other."

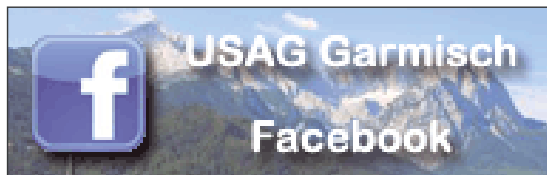
Activities of the day went on despite the colder Alpine weather moving in — forecasts called for snow within 48 hours of the event. Outdoors horseshoes, croquette and a washer pitch kept competitors warm, while inside a roaring fireplace in the Pete Burke Center's ballroom and tables set up like inside a fest tent set a relaxed, pleasant mood.

Being a small garrison, many of the personnel wear several hats and everyone is always busy. The last organizational day was so far in the past that it was hard for even the old-timer local nationals to remember the previous time. Estimates ranged from four to seven years.

"We couldn't do this without the many volunteers," said Garrison Manager Karin Santos. "We'll try to make this a Garmisch tradition."

Santos had requested the MPs operate a "jail" wherein anyone could donate a buck to have someone "arrested" for 10 minutes. Initially it seemed like it backfired; the Bavarians weren't sure what to make of the American tradition and Santos found herself repeatedly accompanied by an apologetic MP to the cell, but with everyone in high spirits and the Nix brothers from driver testing performing lively tunes, it turned out to be the happening spot. Proceeds from the day's activities benefited the Garmisch BOSS.

"I'm glad this turned out so well," said event organizer and HHC USAG Garmisch commander Capt. Kyle Greenberg, who never stopped working throughout the day to ensure the day went smoothly as planned. "Everyone pitched in and had a good time."



Garrison services abound for returning Soldiers

by Charles Stadtlander
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — As Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, return from their yearlong deployment to Afghanistan, some of them may face unexpected debts and legal issues arising from problems that may have been small when they left a year ago, but grew into major obstacles that while they were gone. Though the first Soldiers of the squadron have arrived in Schweinfurt, hundreds more are due to come home over the next several weeks. For many of them, the stresses of battle may be replaced by more domestic troubles, complicating what they expect to be a joyful return home. For example, a 1-91st specialist could return to find that an unpaid phone bill may have ballooned with penalties and late fees or that a credit card debt has been steadily racking up interest for 12 months. The specialist's car may have been dented or scratched in storage, and combined with a dead battery and rusted brake pads from a year of disuse demands a hefty mechanic's bill to get rolling again. If his stored vehicle or furniture was damaged during the deployment,

he may have grounds for a monetary claim. Capt. Amy Stone, the legal assistance attorney from Schweinfurt's JAG office, delivers briefings to the returning Soldiers on possible problems they may expect to face. "It's up to the Army to make sure your stuff is cared for," she said. If taxes, phone bills, credit cards or other debts are outstanding after the deployment, Soldiers are urged to seek help through the JAG office. In particular, the service members civil relief act can be an essential help for Soldiers and their families, offering many protections such as blocking eviction or reducing interest rates on credit card debt. Though not as common as financial issues, the most painful problems Soldiers face arise in family law, says Stone. Marriages often succumb to the stresses of deployment. The same specialist who faced financial strains from debts and car repairs could also come home to divorce paperwork or a request for child and spousal support. These realities of garrison life may come as a shock when the most difficult and stressful part of his job were supposed to be over. When surveyed as to how many of them sat with a JAG at-

torney to write a will before deploying, only a couple of hands went up in the room of two dozen people. This is a problem the JAG office hopes to overcome with the units deploying from Schweinfurt in the next several months. "You were downrange, you saw many things happen. You know now that you're not bulletproof," said Stone to members of the cavalry who left last year without creating a will. Wills are essential for nearly every service member to complete before deploying, she said, in order to adequately provide for family. Soldiers from Schweinfurt's other deploying units should seek help from legal and other garrison services like housing and vehicle storage to try and avoid problems that could have been addressed before leaving. Though the fog of war can dim the importance of the details of everyday life in the face of deployment, Soldiers will return eventually. The fewer stresses they return to, the easier the reintegration to peaceful garrison life. Stone concluded her briefing with a sentiment echoed by the garrison and its available services. "If you need anything or your spouse or family needs anything, we're here for you."



Families wave goodbye to departing Soldiers with the 18th Engineer Brigade, 15th Engineer Battalion. Approximately 450 Soldiers from the battalion departed Oct. 23 to Kuwait for a year-long deployment. Photos of the event are available at the Team Schweinfurt Flickr page, www.flickr.com/photos/schweinfurtpao.

15th Engineer Battalion departs

Story and photo by
Nathan Van Schaik
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — Soldiers with the 18th Engineer Brigade, 15th Engineer Battalion bid farewell to friends and family here at Conn Barracks, Oct. 23, marking the first stage of their yearlong deployment to Kuwait. Deploying companies include the Headquarters and Headquarters Co., Forward

Support Co., 500th Horizontal Engineer Co. and the 902nd Vertical Engineer Co. While deployed, the battalion will augment engineering capabilities within its area of responsibility in support of Area Support Group-Kuwait. Approximately 450 Soldiers from the battalion deployed, according to 1st Lt. Ed Mallue, rear detachment executive officer, leaving behind friends and family in Schweinfurt. The rear detachment, or Delta Company, will also remain in Schweinfurt.

Postal Service Center has answers

The second in a two-part series on mailing items downrange

by USAG Grafenwoehr
Postal Service Centers
News Release

As the holidays approach, families head to the post office with presents and little luxuries that remind deployed Soldiers of home. But aside from the confusion as to what form to fill out, some of those harmless household items could cause your package to be returned or even cost you a hefty fine. Below are some frequently asked questions and answers for some of the most common issues concerning getting mail safely in the hands of your loved one. **Q:** Is mailing to another

APO free? **A:** Generally, any address featuring an APO AE is free, (such as all APOs within Europe and the Middle East) and many with an AP or AA designation. Write "MPS" in the upper right hand corner of the letter or package. However, if special services are applied such as certified mail or insurance, then postage will need to be paid. Other restrictions may apply to other APOs outside the Army Europe. If you are unsure, consult a postal employee. **Q:** What happens if I deploy or leave the area and then a package I mailed is returned containing a restricted item? **A:** You may designate a person (including a postal employee) to remove the restricted item either by providing a power of attorney or via an e-mail through Army Knowledge Online

(AKO) account. **Q:** I am unable to get to the PSC during opening hours or during deployment there are usually long lines at the PSC. What options are available? **A:** It is possible to make an appointment to drop off your packages before opening hours, preferably between 9:15-10 a.m. **Q:** What happens if I leave the area either temporarily or permanently during my sponsor's deployment? **A:** If you are leaving the area for eight working days or more, notify the mailroom concerning disposition of your mail. For example, it can be held for your return or forwarded to another address. If you plan to provide instructions concerning your sponsor's

See MAILING, page 12

Reunited



Photo by Charles Stadtlander

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — Capt. Jose Burgos of the second main body of Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, is welcomed home by his daughter, Nov. 1, in the Finney Fitness Center on Conn Barracks. Over the next several weeks, the rest of the squadron will return to Schweinfurt after a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan's Logar Province.

Customs offers its 2 cents for holiday shopping

Some 'perfect' gifts aren't meant to be sent stateside

by Robert Szostek
U.S. European Command Customs and Border Clearance Agency Public Affairs

MANNHEIM, Germany — Some people are just not good at buying the right gifts. This is usually a matter of taste. However, people new to Europe should note that many items available in Europe that seem like good Christmas presents violate U.S. customs rules. Some products are banned from the United States and others may be carried in baggage, but not mailed. Violations of customs, agriculture or postal regulations can lead to hefty fines and confiscation of the goods. Meat and meat products are the biggest problems, said Bill Johnson, director of the European Command's Customs and Border Clearance Agency. "European delicacies like French pâté, German wurst, Spanish chorizo salami and Italian Parma ham are here for the buying and much sought-after in the States," he said. "Unfortunately, they can also carry the spores of Foot and Mouth Disease, a virulent livestock ailment eradicated in the United States."

These products are therefore banned, as are canned meats and even soup mixes or pasta containing meat. Fresh fruits and vegetables are also prohibited because they could harbor pests like the Mediterranean fruit fly. The threat to U.S. agriculture is so great that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) fine people who mail or take banned foods to the States a minimum of \$300 as a deterrent. Criminal action for deliberate cases of smuggling can result in a \$5,000 fine and a year in jail. Europe boasts many fine wines, spirits and liquor-filled candies that make original Christmas gifts. Unfortunately, the U.S. Postal Service bans all liquor from being mailed, even if it is inside a piece of candy. However, customs allows travelers over 21 years of age to import one liter of duty-free liquor. Johnson said the federal taxes and duties are currently low enough to make it worthwhile to take more than one liter of beer or wine stateside as gifts. However, state laws must also be met, which can add to the cost. Taxes on distilled spirits like Scotch whiskey are generally considered high, he noted. Cuban rum and cigars are also available in Europe but prohibited from import stateside by economic sanctions. And don't be surprised if you get a letter from CBP saying they removed "surprise" eggs from the package you mailed stateside. The reason is that Kinder-brand chocolate eggs and similar items are banned in the United States. While many people

Customs offices

- Bamberg
DSN 469-9312/7460,
CIV 0951-300-9312/7460
- Garmisch
DSN 440-3601,
CIV 08821-750-3601
- Grafenwoehr
DSN 475-7249/8901,
CIV 09641-83-7249/8901
- Hohenfels
DSN 466-2012,
CIV 09472-83-2012
- Schweinfurt
DSN 353-8847/8846,
CIV 09721-96-8847/8846
- Ansbach
DSN 468-7842,
CIV 0981-183-7842

probably think the eggs are innocuous, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission believes the toy surprise hidden inside can pose choking and aspiration hazards to children younger than 3 years of age. Wildlife products also present problems. Buying ivory as a gift is a bad idea, according to customs officials. "Only ivory pieces previously registered with Customs and Border Protection may be imported," Johnson continued. Whale teeth carvings, known as netsuke or scrimshaw, are also prohibited from import. When buying furs, shoppers should insist on a certificate of origin stating the animal's scientific name to avoid buying prohibited endangered species products. The movement of caviar is also restricted. Many European countries have a tradition of making nativity scenes that Americans love to buy. However, the natural products used to make them are often banned from import to the United States because of the agricultural pests that could be nested in them, Johnson noted. Shoppers should realize that they should not mail scenes that contain moss, bark, pinecones, untreated straw or other materials found to contain insects. However, agriculture officials say nativity scenes that are produced using stripped wood, plastic, or commercially cleaned and lacquered straw are fine to mail. Military customs offices can provide more advice on these and other holiday mail questions. There are many informative pamphlets available from Customs and Border Protection and the Department of Agriculture to ensure holiday gifts don't present problems stateside. Information is also available at www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel.

Runners conquer toughest 10 miles

“I have run about 30 or 40 of these races and this was the toughest one so far.” - Sgt. David Mecham

by Sgt. Jerry Wilson
2SCR Public Affairs

ZABUL, Afghanistan — More than 90 U.S. and Romanian service members, along with civilians, from Combined Team Zabul signed up to test their running prowess during the Forward Operating Base Lagman Army 10-Miler Shadow run, Oct. 24.

Troopers from the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and their fellow runners pitted their strength and stamina in a race that can arguably be described as one of the toughest courses in Afghanistan.

The FOB Lagman run was one of six official shadow runs held throughout Afghanistan. The main Army 10-miler is held along the streets of Washington D.C. and is considered the largest annual race of its length. Participation in the shadow run was not for the faint of heart however and presented each runner with some difficult terrain to navigate.

In addition to cold and windy weather conditions, runners had to fight the altitude running at 5,300 feet above sea level. The course was tough and rocky and included a hill with a 23 percent grade competitors had to tackle not once but six times in both directions.

“It was probably the most difficult 10 miles I have run in my life,” said a breathless Sgt. David Mecham, the first U.S. Soldier to cross the finish line. “In my life, I have run about 30 or 40 of these races and this was the toughest one so far.”

Mecham said two of the toughest obstacles during the race were



Courtesy photos

Three competitors tackle the big hill during the Army 10-Miler shadow run at Forward Operating Base Lagman.

the cold weather and the hilly terrain. He said though his hands were freezing, but it was the hills of the course that were the real challenge.

“There was one really long gradual hill and three really steep short ones,” Mecham said describing the course. “The long gradual hill was probably the worst one. The three short ones were pretty bad but you could recover quickly from them,” he continued. “The long one was the hardest.”

Mecham finished the race with a time of 1:08:22. Mecham dedicated his run to his wife Gina and his daughter Veronica.

The 812th Battalion Carpathian Hawks from Romania dominated the top three places overall. Cpl. Ioan Suciu came in first with a time

of 1:02:58. Cpl. Mihai Muresan took second with 1:04:16 and Staff Sgt. Claudiu Suciu took third with a time of 1:05:52.

“The altitude and the hills made it a very difficult race,” said Ioan Suciu, the overall first place champion. “The first laps were the hardest and the other competitors made it a very close race.”

There was a tie for first in the women’s category. Finishing the race with a time of 1:22:32 were 1st Lts. Tiffany Monaco and Cinthia Baustista. Both winners said they have run the 10-miler in Washington D.C. and said the run this year was much harder.

Top honors in the 40 and over masters category went to civilian contractor Danny Harrel. The



Sgt. David Mecham of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment crosses the finish line after what he described as the most grueling 10-mile race he has ever run. Mecham was the first U.S. Soldier to finish the race.

61-year-old finished the race with a time of 1:30:40 and a very sunny disposition.

“It was a great run and a beautiful day for it,” Harrell said. “It was 10 miles but the weather was great.”

In the end only 61 of the original 95 runners to sign up for the competition completed the full race proving that the Army 10-Mile shadow run at FOB Lagman has truly earned the title of toughest race in Afghanistan.

Unsung heroes wouldn’t have it any other way

Story and photo by
2nd Lt. Michael Deem
Convoy Security Team 2

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — Back home the air is crisp and the leaves are beginning to change. As people break out their sweatshirts and fall sets in, so does America’s favorite time of year. Fall brings football and anyone who follows the game closely understands that the unsung heroes of any successful football team are the offensive linemen. They take the field every week and spend their time in the trenches. They leave the field muddled and tired and seldom receive accolades. Their stats and names seldom make the sports section or ESPN’s highlight reel. However, without their contribution, the running backs and quarterbacks couldn’t stand in the limelight. It is all a team effort.

Similarly, the members of the Regimental Support Squadron (RSS) “Muleskinners” are the linemen of the regiment and the convoy security teams (CST) are the defensive tackles protecting the supplies the regiment needs to fight and win. As in football, any combat oriented organization has to do three things well: work together as a team, practice and execute as trained.

The RSS operates as part of Task Force Dragon in southern Afghanistan. Its mission is to transport the beans, bullets, fuel and repair parts needed to sustain all the regiment’s Soldiers and equipment. The RSS operates three CSTs to facilitate the safe delivery of these required items. They are mission tailored to protect any size package required to travel across the rough and sometimes mountainous terrain. When required for larger convoys the three teams fluidly consolidate and work together to operate as a single



Sgt. John York is on point as the lead vehicle driver for CST Team 3.

security package. “Adaptability, vigilance, and perseverance are the key assets that we look for in every team member,” said Sgt. Darrin Schreck, CST team-2 noncommissioned officer in charge.

These missions require incorporating all elements of the squadron. The intelligence section collects updated information on routes and enemy activity. The operations section communicates with the supported units and plans the quantities and types of supplies and equipment required. The supply and transportation troop

builds the support packages. The operations shop command and control the convoys and coordinate the routes with all units.

Just like any team, practice is necessary to ensure that all personnel are prepared for any unexpected situation. Teamwork starts with communication. The CST constantly practices to prepare for any event that can occur on a mission. Maintenance inspects the equipment before each convoy departs to ensure all vehicles can traverse the harsh Afghan terrain. Maintenance personnel work around-the-clock to guarantee mission readiness.

Moving supplies and traveling the roads of Afghanistan is a unique experience. There is no rhyme or reason to the way Afghans drive and no formal driver’s training for locals. This requires attentive, defensive driving skills. Gunners remain alert for any potential threats. Vehicle commanders are like quarterbacks that navigate, track the battle and help to control the movement.

There is no better feeling than completion of a successful mission. Knowing that the regiment’s Soldiers have the supplies they need to fight and win because of your efforts is a very rewarding feeling. After a successful mission, all Soldiers get together and discuss what was done well and how they can improve the playbook.

Next Sunday when you turn on the TV to watch your favorite team, take a moment to consider the contributions of the hard working linemen. Watch how they fight and battle hard to ensure the quarterback is protected or the running back has a clear running lane and think of the members of the RSS CST. These unsung heroes must be always ready for the next mission, but they wouldn’t have it any other way.

Soldiers pay price for actions at courts-martial

**JMTC Office of the Staff
Judge Advocate**
News Release

At a general court-martial convened in Katterbach Kaserne, Oct. 27, CW3 Daniel L. Milsten, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade (Rear, Provisional), was found guilty, in accordance with his pleas, of one specification of possession of child pornography (Article 134, UCMJ). Milsten possessed 322 digital images and eight videos of

child pornography. The military judge sentenced him to be confined for a period of 16 months and to be dismissed from the service.

At a special court-martial convened in Vilseck, Oct. 19, Spc. Joshua R. Franklin, B Company, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Infantry Brigade, was found guilty, in accordance with his pleas, of one specification of willful disobedience of a noncommissioned officer (Article 91, UCMJ), one specification of resisting arrest (Article 95, UCMJ),

one specification of damage to government property (Article 108, UCMJ), one specification of aggravated assault on a military police officer (Article 128, UCMJ), and two specifications of communicating a threat (Article 134, UCMJ).

Franklin was sentenced to be reduced to private (E-2), to forfeit \$900 a month for four months, and to be confined for four months.

At a general court-martial convened in Vilseck, Oct. 5, Spc. Jared R. Bennett, B Company, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regi-

ment, 172nd Infantry Brigade, was found guilty, contrary to his pleas, of one specification of absence without leave for absenting himself from his unit from on or about Aug. 18, 2008, until on or about Sept. 23, 2009 (Article 86, UCMJ).

He was found not guilty of the greater offense of desertion (Article 85, UCMJ), and not guilty of larceny of government property (Article 121, UCMJ). The military judge sentenced Bennett to be reduced to the grade of private (E2) and to be confined for 179 days.

Commentary Developing resiliency integral for for Soldiers, families

The 172nd Infantry Brigade recently began rolling out the Blackhawk Resiliency Program. We were selected by U.S. Army Europe to serve as the pilot brigade for resiliency. This is a tremendous opportunity for Soldiers and family members alike and it is sure to improve our overall readiness. I am just one of many in the brigade who now believe this program is going to benefit us individually and as an organization.

Last year, I had the fortune of attending Master Resiliency Training, then a new program emerging under the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program.



I started the training thinking I was already resilient and did not need this training.

I figured I had already deployed to combat multiple times and my family and I were doing fine. I quickly learned that though I was resilient, I still had plenty to learn about myself and how I could become even more resilient. I learned resiliency training allows you to draw upon and strengthen coping skills everyone has developed naturally, though subconsciously, through life’s experiences. I was amazed to find out why I was reacting in certain ways during certain situations.

My self-awareness improved, adding to my level of control over my thoughts and especially my emotions. I found myself in better control during situations that before had been tough for me to handle. I found there were better ways to communicate to create closer relationships. Overall, I came away a changed person excited to use my new skills with my family and on the job.

Unfortunately, as time passed I found myself using the skills less and less and falling into my same old ways. I realized I needed to be working and living with people who had the same skills so I could more easily form good thinking habits. It was obvious to me that if our Soldiers were to truly benefit from this new way of disciplined thinking, we would have to train as units and our spouses had to have the same skills.

When our brigade had the opportunity to train more Master Resilience Trainers (MRT), we maxed out the class and I asked my wife and three other leaders within our FRG to join the training.

Today, we have more MRTs than any other unit in U.S. Army Europe and we have begun training both Soldiers and spouses. It will not be long before we all have the opportunity to see for ourselves that resiliency training allows individuals and families to make better decisions and objectively deal with stressful situations in their life based on their life experiences.

The resiliency training is only part of the Blackhawk Resiliency Program. Soldiers and spouses are encouraged to continue to develop their strengths in the following five areas: social, physical, emotional, family and spiritual. We will do this simply by attending identified social events and visiting with the support agencies available on Grafenwoehr and Schweinfurt. Attending activities will earn us “resiliency points” that when accumulated allow us to earn incentives such as time off and funded trips. All of this will be recorded in our goal books and managed at the unit level. Information about the program is on the 172nd Infantry Brigade Blackhawks’ Facebook page.

As Michelle and I can attest, this program works. We now use it daily and it has helped our family immensely. I simply ask that you remain open to the Blackhawk Resiliency Program until you have the opportunity to take advantage of the benefits that work for you. This program is new and will take time to develop fully. Please be patient as we move forward and grow more resilient together. Thank you for your service.

*Col. Frank Zachar
Commander,
172nd Infantry Brigade*

Soldiers stay sharp for Culinary World Cup

by **Stefanie Kastner**
7th Army JMTC Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Among steaming pots and scorching ovens in a crowded canvas tent, the U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team (USACAT) from Fort Lee, Va., is preparing for the Culinary World Cup in Luxemburg from Nov. 20-24. The USACAT is training to win the gold in the Culinary World Cup this year. The team will compete against seven other international military culinary arts teams.

“There are eight nations going head-to-head. We compete against each other, but the standard that we are judged by is the World Association of Chefs Society standards,” said the manager of the team, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Russell Campbell. “Everyone starts off with the maximum points allowed, and based on our performance from sanitation to food preparation (taste, flavor, doneness) that’s where we can lose points.”

The Culinary World Cup is hosted in Luxemburg every four years along with the Expogast Trade Show. The World Cup involves many different types of culinary competitions, including an international military culinary competition.

“To be in the military and to have this level of culinary skill is fantastic. To be a part of a team that’s recognized globally as the best culinary team of the Department of the Defense is fantastic,” said Master Sgt. Jason Gray, a member of the team and a culinary instructor in the U.S. Air Force. “For me personally to bring that joint aspect to it as an Air Force guy and to compete with some of the best chefs in the world; that’s who you want to compete with.”

To prepare for the world cup the team is training for its culinary



Photo by Susanne Bartsch

Sgt. Michelle Kashiwagi, a member of the 2010 USACAT team, prepares desert plates with a cherry sauce during the team’s training for the Culinary World Cup 2010 at Grafenwoehr Training Area.

performance at Camp Kasserine at Grafenwoehr Training Area three times a week. During the Culinary World Cup teams get five hours to prepare a hot three-course meal for 100 guests, and have 24 hours to prepare a cold dish table display with seven three-course meals, using only the materials they have on site. Three times a week they simulate their performance exactly as they will do when they compete at the World Cup.

“It’s an excellent opportunity for us to simulate the competition environment at Grafenwoehr. We have

similar equipment,” said U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Edward Fuchs of USACAT. “Without this type of advantage it would be a lot harder to pull-off this kind of cooking on an American-style trailer. Being able to use the European-styled equipment, which is what we will be using in the competition, is a huge advantage for us.”

Being a chef in the military does not automatically get you a spot on the U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team. Soldiers compete to be a part of the team, and to compete internationally.

“For all the chefs that are here whether they’re in the Army, Air Force, Reserve or Coast Guard, it allows them an opportunity to display the talents that they have, and that they’ve developed over the years in the military. This allows us to show that we have great chefs in the U.S. military,” said Campbell. “The chefs compete to earn a spot on the team, not everyone can be here, and hopefully it motivates their peers to cook well, be great chefs, and bring those skills back to the Soldiers in the dining facilities or on the battlefield.”

Although the chefs are now competing in the Culinary World Cup, they are not exempt from some preconceptions that many people have of chefs in the military.

“One of the common preconceptions is that we’re only cooks; we arrive for duty, make 300 servings of mashed potatoes and that’s the extent of our expertise,” said Sgt. Ken Turman, an apprentice in the team who is stationed in Italy as part of U.S. Army Africa. “But, when I began learning my job I didn’t realize how many different opportunities there are for a cook in the military. You can be a cook for a general (enlisted aid), or you could do the CEE20 program where you’re cooking on military planes, or you can rise to eventually be an instructor for the advanced school at Fort Lee, then working at the Pentagon, or the White House.”

Turman said if you work hard. You can get where you want in the Army.

The chefs said there is more to the competition than just cooking. The team is also judged on the visual appeal and presentation of the meal, the table and the food.

A new member of the team, a professional sculptor, was added to make the edible centerpieces that decorate the tables. His designs add continuity and support the overall quality of the presentation.

“The centerpieces are really the cherry on top,” said Sgt. Trent Skinner of the 645th Transportation Company from Las Vegas, an Army Reserve Soldier and a freelance sculptor. “Normally in teams, each person makes their own personal centerpiece. However, we’re trying to keep continuity in the way that everything looks and feels. There are other people here that could make pretty good centerpieces, but we just want them all to look the same.”

Top chefs, dining facilities honored

Culinary warriors will compete at Department of Army level in Dec.

by **U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs**
News Release

HEIDELBERG, Germany — Several U.S. Army Europe and Installation Management Command-Europe food service personnel and dining facilities received awards for achievements at the 43rd Annual Food Service Awards ceremony at Patrick Henry Village here, Oct. 28.

The awards program “recognizes the teamwork, professionalism, service and the quality that our dining facilities have, and continue to improve on,” said Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz, USAREUR’s deputy chief of staff for logistics.

Two sets of awards were presented at the ceremony, for the USAREUR/IMCOM-E Culinary Warrior NCO and Soldier of the Year, and for winners in the garrison and field kitchen categories of the USAEUR/IMCOM-E level of the Philip A. Connelly food service competition.

The four teams that earned Connelly awards competed in a field of 27 dining facilities across Europe, while the culinary warriors proved themselves against a pool of hundreds of possible competitors at a time when many other missions are expected of them, Wentz said.

“We have over 900 food service Soldiers in USAREUR, and at any given time 25 percent of them are deployed and 25 percent of them are getting ready to deploy,” said Wentz. “So in the middle of all that, these Soldiers are continuing to hone their skills and work hard to be the



Photo by Sgt. Daniel J. Nichols

Spc. Danny Washington, 172nd Infantry Brigade, receives the Culinary Warrior Soldier of the Year award from Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz, USAREUR’s deputy chief of staff for logistics, during the 43rd annual food service awards ceremony, Oct. 28.

best of the best.”

The culinary warriors competed for their titles in September, while dining facilities competing for the Connelly awards were evaluated in a number of areas, including food preparation, taste, nutrition, service and sanitation during evaluations earlier this year.

Wentz said the two — quality dining facilities and quality food service Sol-

Philip A. Connelly winners

Large garrison dining facility
U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Dining Facility (Runner-up: South of the Alps Dining Facility, U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza)

Small garrison dining facility
1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Dining Facility, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart (Runner-up: USAG Hohnfels’ Warrior Sports Café Dining Facility)

Culinary Warriors

Culinary Warrior NCO of the Year: Staff Sgt. Keldric Kears, 172nd Infantry Brigade (Runner-up: Sgt. Andrew Nicholson, 5th Quartermaster Company)

Culinary Warrior Soldier of the Year: Spc. Danny Washington, 172nd Infantry Brigade (Runner-up: Spc. Sarah Kilpatrick, 66th Transportation Company)

diers — go hand-in-hand.

“Without great dining facilities we would struggle to maintain the great Soldiers that we have, so thank you for what you do, and continue to do, for our Army,” the general said.

Winners of the USAREUR-level awards will go on to compete at the Department of the Army level in December.

Additional images from the award ceremony are available on the USAEUR Flickr site at www.flickr.com/photos/usarmyeurope_images.

Sign of support



Photo by Helga Arndt

Col. Vann Smiley, USAG Grafenwoehr commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios sign the Customer Service Program pledge at the Rose Barracks Theater, Oct. 29, in front of hundreds of garrison employees.

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr recently developed a comprehensive, holistic Customer Service Program to create and sustain a customer service culture in the Grafenwoehr Military Community. Based on a Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Customer Service initiative, USAG Grafenwoehr has adopted the values for its workforce to better position employees for success in serving our customers, in support of the Army Family Covenant.

Energy tip

Use the energy-saving settings on major appliances like your washing machine. Over 90 percent of the energy a washing machine uses comes from heating the water.

News is addictive. If you need more, subscribe to USAG Grafenwoehr’s daily newsletter. E-mail usaggnews@eur.army.mil to get your daily news fix.

BRATISLAVA

The historic and delightful jewel of the Slovak Republic

Story and photos by
Blair Benz
Special to the Bavarian News

Through the centuries, the Slovak Republic's capital city, Bratislava, has been known by many names: Pressburg in German, Pozosny in Hungarian, even a proposal to call it Wilsonovo mesto after American President Woodrow Wilson at the end of World War I. Nestled between the banks of the Danube, Bratislava is a short 37 miles from Vienna and a world away in terms of history and culture. Bratislava became the capital of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1536 during the prodigious reign of the Habsburg Monarchy. Nineteen Austro-Hungarian kings, queens, emperors and empresses convened at the gothic style St. Martin's Cathedral in the Old Town to be crowned from 1536 to 1830. In the coming decades, Bratislava became the second most industrialized city of the vast Hungarian empire. During the Baroque era, the city developed into artistic center as well as a political and economic hub. Composer Franz Liszt's performed in one of the many Old Town palaces at the age of nine and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart staged his only Hungarian concert in Bratislava in 1762. The Neo-Renaissance style Slovak National Theatre opened in 1886 with much fanfare. Holding opera, theatre and ballet concerts, the theatre's façade is embellished with busts of Goethe, Shakespeare, Liszt and Mozart. At the end of World War I, Czech and Slovakia reluctantly united to form Czechoslovakia and Bratislava became the official name of the city in 1919. The city sustained heavy bombing from allied attacks at the end of World War II and eventually fell under communist rule by 1948. In 1988, the Bratislava Candle Demonstration was the first large-scale anti-communist demonstrations of the Velvet Revolution. Bratislava regained its title as the capital city of the Slovak Republic in 1993.

Old Town

Despite centuries of political manipulation and turmoil, Bratislava's Old Town retains much of its medieval charm mixed with a thriving modern flair. The city continues to be the Slovak Republic's political, cultural and educational center. A towering piece of the original iron gate that used to surround Old Town now hangs dramatically above the cobbled entrance. The main square, Hlavné námestie, features the Old Town Hall with its Baroque tower and adjacent buildings dating back to the end of the 13th century. Used as a municipal building until the middle of the 19th century, the building now houses the City Museum. A cannonball remains embedded in tower wall, a reminder of Napoleon's attempted siege of the city in 1809. The square is surrounded by outdoor cafes and small kiosks selling an assortment of handmade jewelry, needlepoint and pottery.

Winding through the narrow cobblestone streets, the alley spills onto a wide shopping street lined with high-end boutiques. At the top of the street sits St. Michael's Gate, the only remaining gate of the fortified medieval wall that once surrounded the city. Named for the statue of St. Michael adorning the tower's spire, the gate was built in 1300 with restorations to the tower in 1753. Slovakia joined the European Union in 2004 and adopted the euro as its currency Jan. 1, 2009. Signs of economic prosperity and modernization intermingle with grand Baroque palaces and winding cobblestone streets. Bratislava's most whimsical features are the iron and bronze statues that adorn random street corners. A jovial construction worker pops his head out of a manhole on one corner and a paparazzi photographer, poised with his telephoto lens, peers

around another corner. One of the city's most unusual landmarks is the New Bridge or Nový Most. Opened in 1972, the 303-meter asymmetrical suspension bridge spans the Danube. The bridge's most interesting feature is the flying saucer shaped restaurant and observatory perched high atop the pillars. The panoramic views are some of the most spectacular in the city. Bratislava fosters a rich visual and performing arts scene. Jazz, blues, and classical concerts along the Danube and under St. Michael's Tower take place all summer. The Summer Shakespeare Festival takes place in July and August on the grounds of Bratislava Castle. Bratislava's Christmas Market boasts crafts from local artisans. Bratislava may not be as glamorous as Vienna or have the exotic lure of Budapest but this charming jewel on the Danube is not to be missed. Sitting at a cafe overlooking the main square, watching the local buskers entertain small crowds while children play a game of tag in the square is one of the most delightful and relaxing afternoon activities imaginable.

Editor's Note: This article was originally published Aug. 19, 2009, in the Bavarian News.

Clockwise from top right: St. Michael's gate, seen through a corridor of medieval-period homes, shops and cafes is now home to the Museum of Weapons and City Fortifications. The Slovak National Theatre stands as a Baroque emblem of prosperity and theater, opera, and ballet performances run every day except Sunday from September through June. The Nový Most or the New Bridge, opened in 1972, spans the Danube while diners eat at the trendy saucer-shaped restaurant and take in the city views from the observatory at the top. A bronze sculpture of a man resting at the top of a manhole installed into a city street is one example of whimsical art found throughout the city. To celebrate the reconstruction of the Old City in 1997, Bratislava's Magistrate commissioned several sculptures to be placed throughout the city. The statue at the top of the Maximilian Fountain stands tall in front of the Old Town Hall. A cannonball from Napoleon's siege of the city is still lodged in the Old Town Hall tower.



Kick the habit for the

Great American Smokeout, Nov. 18

by BethAnn Cameron

*U.S. Army Public Health
Command (Provisional)*

Staying tobacco-free is not easy. Be proud of yourself as a person who no longer needs to depend on nicotine or be controlled by nicotine. First, you freed yourself from tobacco. Now, you start an important and sometimes challenging journey in your independence from nicotine.

Many people make the transition from using tobacco products to using nicotine replacement patches, gum or other medication. Remember to use the medications as prescribed by your health care provider.

You may experience uncomfortable feelings such as headaches, nervousness, irritation or anxiety. Drinking plenty of water can ease these discomforts. These symptoms will go away as your body tolerates reduced amounts of nicotine until there is no nicotine left.

Before you automatically reached for your cigarettes or spit tobacco. The automatic reaching will be almost gone in a few months. The association between tobacco and many of your daily activities will curtail. Before, you trained your brain to connect using tobacco with a daily activity.

Now, your daily activity is connected with a new habit or pattern of behavior that you developed. (Before, you drank a cup of coffee and smoked a cigarette or reached for your spit tobacco in reaction to fatigue or stress. Now, you reach for a straw, a piece of candy or gum.)

The process of maintaining control in order to stay tobacco-free requires using some strategies. One tip is to avoid people or places where people use tobacco. To cope with an urge to smoke, use the four Ds:

- Deep breathing — take slow deep breaths to feel relaxed and in control.
- Drink water — at least eight glasses a day.



- Do something else to keep busy.

- Delay by counting to 100 or 200 and thinking pleasant thoughts until the urge passes.

Another alternative is to use a “survival kit” of items such as chewing gum, candy, toothpicks, rubber bands and paper clips to serve as substitutes instead of using tobacco.

You may have pleasant memories of tobacco and think how nice it would be to have just one cigarette or a little dip. This is risky because it can lead one to “slip” or relapse into using tobacco. If you slip, make a fresh start by considering the circumstances that caused the slip.

Review your reasons why you quit tobacco: health, family members, personal appearance, easier to breathe or mission readiness. Set a date, make a quit plan and quit again. Be sure to get support system: a buddy, someone to talk with, or a group of people who can support you.

The only people who lose their battle with tobacco are the ones who stop making an attempt. Each unsuccessful attempt to stop in-

creases the likelihood that the next attempt will result in success.

Most people who quit say that about one year after quitting they no longer think about tobacco. This depends on the amount of nicotine, your level of dependence and how many aspects of your life rotated around using tobacco.

Remaining tobacco-free for the rest of your life can require effort. Do whatever is necessary to maintain your tobacco-free status. Make it last.

For additional information and support in staying tobacco-free, contact your medical treatment facility. These online resources are also available:

- DOD, Quit Tobacco, www.UCANQUIT2.org
- American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking, www.lungusa.org/stop-smoking/how-to-quit/getting-help
- American Cancer Society, Fresh Start Program, www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/fresh-start.asp

Editor's Note: BethAnn Cameron is a health educator with the U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional).

Third-hand smoke takes it to new level

by Karla Simon

*U.S. Army Public Health
Command (Provisional)*

Tobacco smoke has added a new potential danger to its list of hazards: third-hand smoke. The term was coined in a study published in the medical journal, “Pediatrics,” to describe the interaction of tobacco smoke with indoor surfaces.

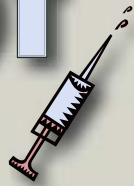
Most people know that first-hand smoke is inhaled directly by a smoker and second-hand smoke is the smoke passively breathed in by people near someone smoking. Researchers have determined that third-hand smoke is the residue left on surfaces from second-hand smoke. The pungent scent of smoke that lingers in enclosed spaces long after a cigarette has been extinguished gives away the presence of third-hand smoke.

Parents often smoke when their children are out of the house to try to reduce second-hand smoke exposure. They also turn on fans to ventilate the room and let down a window in a car to dissipate cigarette smoke. However, these actions do not eliminate the health hazards associated with tobacco smoke. Third-hand smoke can remain on or in the smoker long enough to settle in places considered smoke-free. Babies and toddlers are of particular concern, since they have far greater exposure to contaminated surfaces.

There are ways to minimize the impact of third-hand smoke in residences and automobiles:

- Thoroughly clean everything (bedding, drapes, furnishings). Steam-clean carpet and upholstered furniture and car seats. Make sure to use a cleaning agent and not just a deodorizer that only masks the smell.
- Remove smoke-infused wallpaper and replace all heating and air conditioning filters regularly.
- Detoxify your home and vehicle with fresh air.

a shot of advice



by Lt. Col. Stephen Linck

BMEDDAC

Q. I heard that doing breast self-exams each month doesn't really help you detect breast cancer. And I thought I read somewhere that they're increasing the initial mammogram age from 40 to 50. What's the right thing to do?

V/r,
Screener in Schweinfurt

A. Dear Screener,
This sounds like a simple question but wow, it gets more complicated and controversial every day.

Recently, a federal task force suggested making mammograms optional for women under 50, but the American Cancer Society still recommends starting at 40. Clinical research suggests that getting mammograms before age 50 offers little benefit and the cumulative radiation exposure may increase the risk of breast cancer. Additionally, math figures into the argument. More mammograms equal more procedures like needle biopsies.

The American Cancer Society says “for every 1,000 women in their 40s screened for 10 years, 600 will be called back for a repeat mammogram for something suspicious, 350 will get biopsied and about five will end up with a diagnosis of breast cancer. And some women might get treated for a cancer that would never have caused a problem.”

Analysis of this data is not statistically significant, but what is the value of the possibility of saving a life?

The same holds true for breast self-exams. More exams lead to more procedures, which have their own inherent risks.

You are starting to get an idea of the complexity of making a simple recommendation. The military health system has not changed the recommendation to start regular mammograms at 40. I think the decision is best left to the individual and their primary care provider. If you have certain risk factors like a family history, I recommend starting mammograms at 40. The best advice I can give is to talk with your provider to determine the best time to start screening.

Q. I think my friend is depressed. I looked up the symptoms online and she has most of them. I think it's probably because her husband is deployed. She doesn't want to talk to anyone though. How do I help her get help?

Thanks,
Helpless in Hohenfels

A. Dear Helpless,

Tell her she is crazy for not talking to anyone!

No, please don't do that. In all seriousness, tell her your concerns. Tell her what you see in her behavior or manners that give you cause for concern. You will have to use caution and not push too hard or seem judgmental because you run the risk of alienating your friend.

If your friend refuses to talk with you just say you brought up the subject because you care, but don't force the issue. The only time you can force someone to get help is if you think they are a danger to others or themselves.

There are many reasons people don't seek help, maybe they don't think they are depressed or they are embarrassed. These days there are a lot of options for people. If they don't want to seek traditional behavioral health assistance there are chaplains and military family life consultants who can help. These people can offer advice or counseling outside of the traditional health care system.

You can't force help, but you can express your concern and caring for the person.

If you need a shot of advice, e-mail your question to Lt. Col. Stephen Linck at brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil.

Parents can help combat childhood obesity

by Wendy LaRoche

*U.S. Army Public Health
Command (Provisional)*

The last two decades have shown a rise in childhood obesity, including children in Army families. As obesity numbers in children continue to climb, so do conditions associated with obesity, for example Type 2 diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea and high cholesterol. Early detection and treatment can reduce the likelihood of these health problems from occurring. Parents need to advocate for their children by asking questions during annual well visit check-ups with their child's health care provider and by establishing healthy habits at home.

The most widely used diagnostic tool to identify weight problems within a population is Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is a statistical measure calculated from a child's weight and height. For children, BMI is age and sex specific and is often referred to as BMI for age. BMI doesn't measure body fat; it identifies healthy body weight based on comparisons between a child's height and weight as plotted on a growth curve.

A child's BMI is typically calculated as part of an annual well-visit physical. After the BMI is calculated for children and teens, the BMI number is plotted on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's BMI-for-age growth charts (for either boys or girls) to obtain a percentile range. The general rule of thumb is that overweight children statistically fall between the 85th and 94th percentile compared to the weight of their peers (same sex and age). Obesity is defined as the 95th percentile or above on the growth chart used.

BMI is one indicator for obesity. Your child's doctor can help identify whether your child's weight is a concern. As a parent you can also help by providing the following information to your child's health care provider:

- Family history of obesity and weight-re-



Courtesy photo

Childhood obesity is currently on the rise. Establishing healthy eating habits for children and encouraging them to be physically active can help combat the growing problem.

lated health problems, such as diabetes,

- Your child's eating habits and calorie intake, and
- Your child's physical activity level.

If your child is overweight or obese, try making small changes to eating habits right away. In the morning, use fat-free or reduced-fat milk in cereal and purchase whole-grain cereals. Add fruit to the morning meal. Consider giving the child oatmeal or whole-grain waffles, and limit items like toaster pastries.

Prepared lunches from home will allow you to have more control over your child's caloric intake. For lunch, consider sandwiches made of whole-wheat or whole-grain breads and try mustard or low-fat mayonnaise as a condiment.

Include fruit; it's sweet and can satisfy a sweet tooth! Be creative and use a variety of fresh seasonal fruits. Carrots and celery are great in lunches and can be served with peanut butter, fat-free yogurt or fat-free ranch dressing

for dipping. Avoid snacks containing partially hydrogenated oils such as coconut and palm oils. These oils are often used in processed foods such as cookies and crackers. Last, provide a bottle of refreshing water; your child will appreciate it especially in warmer weather.

Think differently about dinner. Engage your children in the cooking process and portion food in a serving dish that would equal a serving size for each family member. Passing the serving dishes around will teach your child to take smaller food portions. Try broiling or baking something you might normally fry. Add lots of any kind of veggies and minimize starches like potatoes or white rice.

When it comes to dessert, offer healthy options like a frozen fruit bar or a yogurt smoothie. Use your blender and whip up some frozen fruit and fruit juice; the combinations are endless. If it is cake your kids crave, angel food cake is a good option and it's fat free.

Exercise is a great family activity. Walks after dinner are a nice way to burn calories. Let children help plan the exercise and physical activity regimen. Get them moving. On warmer days, ride bikes, run or play tennis or basketball. If the weather is rainy, play indoor games. Check out an exercise or dancing DVD from the library or simply play a favorite CD and have fun making up silly dances.

Help combat childhood obesity by establishing healthy eating habits in your children and encouraging them to be physically active.

Great online resources for parents are:

- Healthy Youth for a Healthy Future, www.surgeongeneral.gov/obesityprevention/index.html
- Let's Move, www.letsmove.gov
- We Can! (Ways to enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition), www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/index.htm

Editor's Note: Wendy LaRoche is a health educator with the U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional).

Exercise teaches Soldiers intangible skills



Pfc. Kyle McPeake, 172nd Sep. Inf. Bde., pulls security during a patrol of a hostile area.

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other impressed him, especially the volunteer Latvian National Guard, who were eager to soak up as much knowledge as they could from the embedded American platoon.

Building international partnership capacity is crucial to the success of the 172nd Sep. Inf. Bde. mission, be it training or in contingency operations in places like Iraq or Afghanistan. Through training exercises like Saber Strike, Blackhawk Soldiers will be better prepared, more efficient and more capable when the time comes to work with other nations in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Everybody has different techniques but you still get the same information out," Sgt. Steven Downs, fire support specialist, A Co., 1-2nd Inf., TF 3-66, 172nd Sep. Inf. Bde., said. "It broadens our spectrum of ability to work with other nations since the fight in Afghanistan is a multinational fight and not just the United States going it alone."

Downs stressed that Saber



The medical response team prepares to move the victim during a simulated improvised explosive device attack, Oct. 27.

Strike was an extremely valuable training exercise for his Soldiers and himself. He said that it gave perspective to his Soldiers that there are many ways to achieve the same result and they enjoyed working with Soldiers from other nations.

"We have never had a chance to work with these nations before," Downs said. "I am impressed with what they have taught us."

Sgt. Stuart Dabney, linguist, 504th MI Co., 172nd Sep. Inf. Bde., said that the exercise taught critical skills Soldiers need to possess in real world missions, especially the skills gained from

key leader engagements. Dabney said experience from key leader engagements is necessary to win the trust of village leaders in places like Afghanistan.

"You can't win the support of the Afghan people without the trust of their elders," Dabney said. "Working with foreign militaries reinforced cultural understanding as a vital skill which the modern American Soldier must have."

Though the ranges at Adazi Training Ground have fallen silent and frozen, the camaraderie, and the newly forged bonds will be not be forgotten, but carried on to Afghanistan and beyond.

Spring break will now be April 16-24

by JMTC Public Affairs

News Release

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The Bavaria District of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools-Europe (DoDDS-E) has modified the school's calendar and changed the dates of the 2010-2011 spring break to ensure the Soldiers of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade enjoy spring break with their children.

Spring break is now scheduled for April 16-24 for DoDDS-E children in the Bavaria region only, which includes Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Schweinfurt, Ansbach, Garmisch, Illesheim and Bamberg. The 172nd Separate Inf. Brig., one of the major combat units in the area will be participating in training during the originally scheduled break. The change allows them to spend more time with their families.

According to Mike Thompson, DoDDS-E district superintendent for Bavaria, the dates for spring break changed after a request was submitted by the U.S. Army in Europe and the Joint Multinational Training Command. Thompson said, the third grading period will still end April 7, and the fourth grading period begins April 11.

"We reviewed all our options related to the schedule change," Thompson said. "We see this as a great example of DoDDS' ability to flex to meet the needs of the Soldiers and their families."

DoDDS-E employees who have scheduled appointments or purchased nonrefundable tickets for themselves or family members in anticipation of the previously scheduled spring break are required to provide proof to their supervisors before taking leave. Requests to meet these commitments must go through the school administrator to District Superintendent Mike Thompson. Commitments will be honored if they were made prior to Oct. 20. These employees are also expected to work at their schools, during the dates of the new spring break, said Thompson.

"Our mission is to provide exemplary educational programs that inspire and prepare all students for success in a global environment," said Thompson. "This is a great example of our ability to adapt to that environment while offering a quality education."

For more information concerning changes to the schedule, contact Mike Thompson at DSN 468-7430, CIV 09641-83-7430, mike.thompson@eu.dodea.eu. For more information about the Joint Multinational Training Command, visit www.hqjmtc.army.mil.

Mailing deadlines for holidays are nearing

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mail, you should have either general or specific a power of attorney for handling postal concerns.

Q: When do I need a customs form?

A: Anything other than documents requires a customs form, no matter where you are mailing it. Even an envelope containing padding, bubble wrap or a small magnet must have a customs form, whether you are mailing to the United States, Afghanistan or even from Main Post to Rose Barracks.

Q: Do I have to wrap my package?

A: The only time it is required for you to wrap your package is if the box you are using originally contained a restricted item such as a bleach box or a case of Corona beer.

It is recommended that you wrap your package if the decorations or writings make it difficult to readily recognize the address. All previous barcodes or addresses should be covered or blacked out with a heavy marker.

Wrapping paper is currently provided in the postal service center free of charge. However, availability is subject to budgetary constraints.

Q: Does the Postal Service Center provide boxes?

A: The PSC provides priority boxes of various sizes free of charge, but the package must be shipped using priority service. Priority boxes cannot be used for shipping MPS (free) mail.

They can be used to ship items downrange, but priority prices apply. Wrapping of a new priority box received from the PSC to avoid charges is not authorized, however wrapping a used priority box that has been mailed to you is permitted.

Main Post's PX sells boxes suitable for shipping, or boxes can be obtained from the recycle center.

Additional questions can be directed to your local postal specialists at DSN 476-2581, CIV 09662-83-2581 (Rose Barracks) or DSN 475-6333, CIV 09641-83-6333 (Main Post).

Editor's Note: Information provided by postal service centers at Main Post and Rose Barracks.

Students win when parents are involved

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Wednesday, Nov. 17: Support Professionals Day. Everyone that works in the DoDDS schools, CYSS and the Army Education Centers programs are involved in education. From the cooks in the Child Development Centers introducing new tasks and textures to young children, test proctors at the Army Education Centers or the Special Education Assistants in the schools, a thank you or quick note is always appreciated.

Thursday, Nov. 18: Extracurricular Exploration. Ask your students school about the after-school programs offered, go online at <https://webtrac.mwr.army.mil/webtrac/Grafenwoehr-cyems.html> to explore the CYSS EDGE!, SKIES Unlimited and Youth Sports and Fitness pro-

grams available for children 3 to 18 years old, and check out what adult "extra" education classes are offered through Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, Army Community Service, Arts and Crafts Center, Outdoor Recreation and the libraries, there is always something happening in the Grafenwoehr Military Community.

Friday, Nov. 19: Educators Day. All the educators in your life play a role in shaping your future. Most people can remember at least five people that made a difference in their lives. So take the time to recognize educators in the DoDDS schools, CYSS programs and at the Army Education Center.

Editor's Note: Ann Bruennig is U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr's school liaison officer.

ESPN arrives


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Challenge, a Soldier-skill competition with six events, during the SportsCenter broadcast with teams representing various U.S. Army units from the region. ESPN will present a trophy to the winning team during a live segment of the program.

"Highlighting our Soldier-athletes, while shining a light on the U.S. Army in Europe, during this ESPN on-air broadcast is a great way to celebrate our veterans and service members," said Brig. Gen. Steven L. Salazar, commanding general of the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr. "The Grafenwoehr Military Community is pleased to host ESPN for Veterans Day. This is an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions made by Soldiers in Europe, past and present, to our nation's security."

The special SportsCenter will air live on ESPN in the United States, and on the AFN Sports channel overseas.

For more information, contact Denver Makle at JMTC Public Affairs at denver.makle@eur.army.mil or 09641-83-7127; or Kim Jessup at ESPN at kimberly.jessup@espn.com or (860) 766-0358.



JOINT MULTINATIONAL TRAINING COMMAND
in conjunction with
UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON GRAFENWOEHR

celebrates
Native American Heritage Month

at the
Performing Arts Center, Grafenwoehr Bldg. 103
on
Nov. 18, 2010
11 a.m. □ p.m.

Attire: Duty uniform/casual


POC: SFC King DSN: 475-8038 CELL: 01622-96-6479 email: yolanda.m.king@eur.army.mil

Taste delectable ethnic food samplings

Behold tribal spiritual dance

View rare cultural artifacts

Listen to inspirational poems



Flipping the switch



Garrison Commander Col. Vann Smiley and Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios flip on the switch for the first photovoltaic project at Building 244, Oct. 26.

Grafenwoehr furthers its green footprint

Story and photo by
Werner Ohla
USAG Grafenwoehr DPW

Long before the Installation Management Campaign Plan was published, the garrison launched a vigorous game plan to curb the rapidly growing energy bill and to move toward a "net zero energy installation."

As a result many initiatives have been launched including the success story of receiving \$1.5 million to execute the largest photovoltaic project in the history of IMCOM Europe.

Typical buildings such as 244 and 725 on Main Post and 680, 681 and 682 on Rose Barracks were se-

lected all together receiving 2,700 m² of photovoltaic roof systems to generate 300 megawatt hours of electricity each year. The execution of solar thermal and photovoltaic projects within the USAG will result in significant revenue offsets for electrical consumption.

For the first time within the IMCOM-Europe platform, USAG Grafenwoehr materialized the German Federal Government financial incentives by feeding into the public grid Army photovoltaic generated electricity. The garrison will generate annual revenues of \$125,000, which will offsets our purchased electricity bill at the rate of 3 to 1. The USAG Grafenwoehr is leaning forward to launch additional photovoltaic projects to further offset our electricity bill.

Editor's Note: Werner Ohla is the DPW Utilities Branch chief.